

watch helplessly as their children are condemned to attend a run-down school because Congress refuses to act.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress must not leave town without addressing this crisis. We must not sneak out the back-door without passing commonsense school construction assistance.

A SUCCESSFUL AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, after-school hours are the most vulnerable for school children to become involved with gangs, with drug abuse, with violence and with vandalism. Statistics demonstrate that between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., the immediate hour after most children are released from school, juvenile crime more than doubles from the preceding hour of 2:00 to 3:00.

It has become evident that safe and healthy alternatives need to be found for latchkey school children and that concentrated efforts, ones that focus on literacy, on tutoring, on homework assistance, are becoming necessary, especially for our at-risk youth.

YMCAs, like many after-school programs, have helped improve children's academic achievements, their school attendance, their behavior, their dropout rates and grade retention.

Denis Espinosa, a young man who recently testified at a Children's Caucus event here in Washington, is evidence that an after-school program can guide children to becoming responsible and productive adults. I congratulate Denis for his exemplary outlook, as well as Anna Nechelles, executive director of the West Dade Branch of the YMCA, for her commitment to the future of south Florida's children.

GOP BUDGET IS A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

(Mr. CROWLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, all year the GOP Congress has employed gimmicks and distractions against the American people in their attempt to pass a nearly trillion dollar tax break for the wealthy and special interests in our country, a tax break soundly rejected by hard-working Americans. In the past few months, the GOP has dressed its trickle-down, wolf-like budget in sheep's clothing. They now claim to be protecting Social Security, even calling for across-the-board cuts to save the surplus, when their own CBO numbers show them dipping into the Social Security surplus by nearly \$17 billion.

Back in 1935, they voted to table Social Security. How can we expect them today to try to protect it?

Now they are advocating a minimum wage bill, but upon further examination the minimum wage bill is loaded down with a tax relief for the wealthiest special interests in this country with only a 33-cent raise each year over the next 3 years for hard-working men and women in this country; a tax break for the wealthiest corporate CEOs in the history of the world and a measly 30 cents an hour raise for their workers.

Mr. Speaker, this is just a back-door attempt, an attempt made in sheep's clothing, for the GOP leadership to give their best friends a tax break.

NO MEANS NO

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, they just do not get it. President Clinton, Vice President Gore and the Democrat leaders in Congress are failing to grasp one simple concept: No means no.

When we passed every appropriations bill this year, we did it in a way that will protect every last dollar in the Social Security trust fund, but the Democrat leaders have opposed us almost every step of the way. They are pulling out all the stops to try to get their hands on that Social Security money for their big government Washington programs. That is the way they have been doing things for 30 years, but the Republicans have changed that. We stopped the raid on the Social Security trust fund and we are asking the Washington bureaucracy to reduce its spending by just 1 percent to make sure that Social Security remains strong.

We want to root out some of the waste, fraud and abuse that plagues the bureaucracy. So I hope President Clinton will sign our legislation that protects Social Security, because if he keeps telling us to dip into that Social Security money we will keep telling him no, and we will mean it.

THE REAL CONCERNS OF AMERICA, SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE, HMO REFORM, TO NAME A FEW

(Mr. FROST asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, the American people want us to put aside the partisanship of the last Republican Congress and to get to work on American families' real concerns, the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, real HMO reform, more teachers and lower class sizes for our children.

Unfortunately, this Republican Congress has been little different from the last. They are holding hostage real HMO reform and they refuse to help local communities reduce class size by hiring 100,000 new teachers.

The chief actuary of the Social Security Administration has found that the Republican budget would do nothing to extend the life of Social Security, not by even a single day. They have done nothing to strengthen Medicare, and GOP leaders refuse to even admit the existence of American seniors' most pressing problem, the astronomical cost of prescription drugs.

On the other hand, Republicans tried to squander the surplus, risking Medicare and Social Security, to fund a \$1 trillion tax break for special interests. Those are the values of this Republican Congress, Mr. Speaker, \$1 trillion for tax breaks for special interests but not a dime for prescription drugs for seniors.

WE NEED A PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise to join my colleagues in lamenting legislation important to my constituents and the American people that the Republican leadership has ignored. I am speaking about gun safety, prescription drug benefits, the Patients' Bill of Rights and campaign finance reform.

The Republican leadership has disregarded the American people and killed these measures for this session of Congress. Democrats still believe we can get action on agendas that matter to reduce class size and raise student achievement by providing for local schools to hire 100,000 new teachers, make our neighborhoods safer and build on the progress we have made over the last 7 years in reducing violent crime by funding 50,000 new police officers. We are committed to safeguarding the environment.

Another year, another Republican Congress that ignores the needs of middle class families; more interest in providing a trillion dollar tax cut for corporate and special interests, but they do not care about finding a dime for Medicare prescription drugs for seniors and now they are at the beck and call of the HMO lobbyists but they have failed to send a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights to Congress. It is time for all of these programs to get in place now more than ever.

THE MONEY BELONGS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, NOT THE GOVERNMENT

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1